

NCA
VOC FOR PGM/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-5805
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FOCUS: ALDO MORO -- VICTIM OF TERRORISTS

ANNCR:

NEARLY EIGHT WEEKS AFTER HE WAS KIDNAPPED BY ITALIAN SO-CALLED RED BRIGADE TERRORISTS, FORMER ITALIAN PREMIER ALDO MORO HAS BEEN FOUND DEAD IN ROME. HERE, WITH A PROFILE OF THE MURDERED MISTER MORO, IS -----.

VOICE:

LEADER OF ITALY'S CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY, FIVE TIMES ITALIAN PREMIER, AND THE MAN EXPECTED TO BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC, ALDO MORO, SIXTY-ONE YEARS OLD WAS ONE OF HIS COUNTRY'S MOST DURABLE POLITICAL FIGURES. AMONG HIS KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE YEARS WAS THE DESIGN OF CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENTAL COALITIONS THAT MAINTAINED THE DELICATE BALANCE OF ITALIAN POLITICS IN A COUNTRY WHERE RIGHT AND LEFT HAVE VIED FOR CONTROL SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO. HIS MOST RECENT ACHIEVEMENT ALONG THOSE LINES WAS THE PRESENT FIVE-PARTY COALITION THAT KEEPS CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PREMIER GIULIO ANDREOTTI AT THE ITALIAN HELM. A SPECIAL INGREDIENT OF TODAY'S GOVERNMENTAL SITUATION IN ITALY -- COMMUNIST PARTY SUPPORT OF ITS TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY ADVERSARY -- HAD ALSO EARNED MISTER MORO'S CAUTIOUS SUPPORT.

MISTER MORO WAS A DEVOUT ROMAN CATHOLIC WITH A SOFT-SPOKEN PERSONAL STYLE, WHO EVEN WHILE HE HEADED THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, CONTINUED TO TEACH CRIMINAL LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ROME. THERE, IN HIS DARK DOUBLE-BREADED SUITS, HE WAS POPULAR AS A PROFESSOR WHO RARELY FAILED HIS STUDENTS. ONE OF HIS FAVORITE RECREATIONS WAS STROLLING FOR EXERCISE DURING HOLIDAYS IN THE ITALIAN ALPS.

MISTER MORO WAS BORN IN 1916, THE SON OF A SCHOOL SUPERVISOR IN MAGLIE, A SMALL TOWN IN APULIA AT THE HEEL OF THE ITALIAN BOOT. HE GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY IN APULIA'S MAIN CITY, BARI, AND BY THE AGE OF 24 WAS A FULL PROFESSOR THERE.

AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF ITALIAN FASCISM, ALDO MORO PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN BUILDING THE CHURCH-BACKED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN HIS REGION. THE FORMER ITALIAN PREMIER -- A MAN WHO WAS ALWAYS HIGHLY PROTECTIVE OF HIS PERSONAL PRIVACY -- WAS MARRIED AND THE FATHER OF THREE DAUGHTERS AND A SON. ALWAYS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS, HE HAD BEEN ON HIS WAY FROM CHURCH TO THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT WHEN TERRORISTS SEIZED HIM AFTER KILLING HIS PERSONAL BODYGUARDS.

WJL/JS/PY